



Camp
Alexander
Mack

IMPACT

Stories of the Difference Donors Make: Winter 2023

*Be quick to give a meal to the hungry,
a bed to the homeless—cheerfully.*

*Be generous with the different things God gave you,
passing them around so all get in on it: if words,
let it be God's words; if help, let it be God's hearty help.*

*That way, God's bright presence will be evident in everything
through Jesus, and he'll get all the credit as the
One mighty in everything—encores to the end of time.*

1 Peter 4:9-11 (The Message)



The community of Camp Mack is a generous one. Since I have joined the staff, our volunteers and donors have: retired the debt on the John Kline Welcome Center, replaced roofs on many buildings, sustained the camp through the difficult summer of the pandemic, completed an ambitious capital campaign providing incredible opportunities for the future, and continued in the ministry of changing lives through the mission of sanctuary.

Later in this newsletter, you will read one person's testimony to volunteering here. Her words echo the message of these verses from 1 Peter. Respond to the need before you with joy. Give back what God has given you, so all can benefit. Whether sharing your emotional and spiritual support or physically providing for a need, respond as God's servant.

Your gifts to this ministry provide God's love and joy to all who seek it here. Thank you for the impact you have on so many lives. You are the ministry of Camp Mack – You are the instrument of God's gifts.

Gene Hollenberg- Executive Director

Prayer Requests

Be in prayer for those
contemplating
volunteering or working at
Camp Mack this summer.





Ulrich Update

My first Camp Mack experience came as a socially awkward 3rd grader who had never been away from home for a whole week without family. I was excited to pass my swim test and eat cinnamon toast. I was not as excited for quiet time since I didn't like napping as a child. I love music, and through camp, I was introduced to those favorite camp songs: "Roll me over the Ocean," "Give Me Oil for my Lamp," and many more. The first time I heard the song, "Pass it On," I sat on a primitive log bench at the campfire while individuals, whose faces I couldn't really see in the glow of the firelight, sang accompanied by a guitar. I think the words of that song may have been etched into my soul that day.

In early December, I volunteered a week of time to work on the Ulrich House renovation. I arrived early and enjoyed breakfast, conversation, and coffee at the dining hall prior to beginning work. Walking together with the other volunteers, we took a tour of the work site and got a list of the projects that needed our work.

At this stage of the project, much of the main floor of Ulrich remained untouched. My first look upstairs showed the new configuration. A wider hallway and a large area at the end prepared for the elevator access. This new look upstairs keeps the beautiful knotty pine on the bottom portion of the wall and has light cream-colored painted drywall at the top. It still feels like camp, but with the new LED lights and the lighter paint, the spaces in Ulrich feel bright, fresh and welcoming for both returning and first-time campers.

I have stayed in some of these rooms before as an adult attending Labor Day Family Camps. The new HVAC system will be a welcome relief to future campers for days like those sweltering Septembers that I remember. Comfortable beds, new furniture, and updated restroom facilities along with program space on the main floor will make Ulrich House a comfortable and welcoming retreat space. My best friend became my best friend more than 25 years ago at a retreat held at Camp Mack. I want other individuals to have those same opportunities to make lifelong relationships.

As the volunteers toured the upper floor, I could see the vision for what Ulrich will become, but there was still much to do. I had saved a week of vacation time, and I was glad to use it toward this volunteer effort. Among the long list of tasks to accomplish included sanding the drywall in 3 large rooms, wiping away the dust, then priming and painting—2 coats. Much of the trim work remained. More trim needed to be created by routing, sanding, and staining the lumber. Washing, priming, and painting—2 coats on the 2 staircases. Old paint needed sanding from the knotty pine paneling where the old heat registers had been. Then these areas and years of scuffs on the wood needed restaining. Insulation and drywall work was needed near the elevator entrance. The new ADA compliant bathroom needed everything from the studs inward. There were electrical gremlins to be eliminated by rewiring, carpeting to remove, a new external door to install after cutting through the wall, and a ceiling tile grid needed straightening.

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Volunteer Needs

New furniture for Ulrich is arriving soon! Keep your eyes open for a volunteer work day to help build these new couches, beds, and other furniture.



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Fortunately, nine other individuals from my church, Creekside Church of the Brethren, also donated time that week, along with additional volunteers who became new friends as we worked together. We were led by Steve Keim who instructed, mentored, fixed, and worked alongside us while trying to be certain that necessary items were available to keep the project moving forward.

Like many others, I began with sanding drywall. It was at the top of the to-do list. That old proverb about “many hands make light work” is gratefully true. We were all working hard, but that very dusty portion of the sanding was completed quickly, so by afternoon, the dust was swept up and primer was going on. Over the course of my week, I also pulled up carpet, primed a portion of the staircase, sanded the paneling to remove the paint in room after room after room, then stained it all. I cleaned, moved and reorganized tools. I helped to hang doors and worked alongside new and current friends. I took many pictures and enjoyed a Camp Mack sunset overlooking Lake Waubee.

Like an orchestra, many different things happen all at the same time, but each instrument and individual contributes to the whole melody. That’s how it worked during my volunteer time at camp. Each person contributed from their own gifts and strengths. Together the items from the list and even more were accomplished.

The lyrics of the first verse of “Pass it On” say:

*It only takes a spark
To get a fire going,
And soon all those around
Can warm up in its glowing.
That's how it is with God's love.
Once you've experienced it,
You spread His love to ev'ryone.
You want to pass it on*



One thing that Camp Mack does really well is to share the Love of God with those who come. Many years ago, I felt that love as an awkward child during my first trip to camp and every time since. I’m grateful that I had this opportunity to help a little on this renovation so that Ulrich will be a more useful resource, bringing more people to camp to hear the message of God’s Love, to build lasting relationships, and to experience God through the natural beauty of Camp Mack.

Pass it on!

By Lisa Vardaman

Giving Opportunities

Sponsor a Summer Staffer

Without the work of summer staff, summer experiences at Camp Mack would not be possible. By sponsoring a summer staff, you can help them to have the best summer possible. Contact the Camp office to learn more.